

UNITED IRELAND ASSOCIATION
(BRITAIN)

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FARN

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30th ¹³⁶ May '70.

Dear Bob,

I'm sorry you were unable to be at the Irish Unity & Civil Rights Committee last night (Fri. 29th). It was disappointing from my point of view in so far that the Council of Irish Counties felt unable to nominate people for the three vacancies the Committee were prepared to allocate to the Council. Maurice O'Connor was there, & defended the Council's attitude, but nonetheless, I sensed a feeling of disappointment that the Counties felt unable to play a larger role in the Irish Community in Britain during these - what I am sure will be - historic days.

Ladgh Leehan & I have had several conversations regarding the Mac Swiney 50th Anniversary. Unfortunately there are a number of factors that make it necessary that the annual Commemoration Mass should be held on the 18th of October. As you know, the U.I.A. & the old I.R.A. always sponsor the 530 P.M. Mass on the

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Sunday, nearest to the actual date of the martyr's death. However, as I also explained to you, we, all of us, are very anxious to make this year worthy of the occasion, & are prepared to fall in with any arrangements made by the Cork Association. Would there be any possibility of forming some kind of co-ordinating committee, so that we can tie things up & prevent any exploitation of the occasion for non-altruistic reasons. I do not visualise any big ceremonies such as a parade or public demonstration. I think the Mass should be the central feature, followed by a social cum lecture during the evening. It should be possible to find some leading personalities who were contemporary with Mac Swiney to attend & pay their tributes. However these are only suggestions, & we will co-operate in every way you wish.

On a personal note, may I bring to your notice the enclosed appeal from the United Ireland Association. Normally, we don't make appeals to the Irish public, but during the crises last year, we received direct appeals for financial help from the 6 Cos. We responded of course, & as a result our funds have been down to a level which impedes the full pursuance of our basic work - propaganda & political pressure. Any contribution would be very welcome.

Although at this point, we seem to have plenty of time with the summer holidays etc, October will be on us in no time, so please keep in touch with me over the Mac Swiney arrangements
yours as ever Frank McLeah